THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The response has been quite encouraging.

(d) 379 candidates, who had passed, were found medically fit. These candidates have been included in the national merit list for recruitment into the IAF.

Defence Production Unit in Gujarat

806. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any representation has been received from Government of Gujarat for starting Defence production unit in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Task Force was set up to *inter-alia* examine the issue. The Task Force has recently submitted its report.

Manufacture of Sukhoi-MKI fighters by HAL

807. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that HAL has said that it will roll out the first locally built Sukhoi-MKI fighters in 2004;

(b) whether HAL is spending Rs. 32.5 billion to make this aircraft in addition to a capital investment of Rs. 32.5 billion on equipment and tooling; and

(c) if so, what are the details of this project?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) The first SU-30 MKI aircraft under license manufacture at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is planned to be delivered to Indian Air Force in 2004-2005.